

## **Independent Climate Change E-mails Review**

### **Notes of Interview with Professor Trevor Davies, PVC Research, Enterprise and Engagement**

**Interviewers: Sir Muir Russell & David Eyton**

**Interview carried out at UEA on 26 March 2010.**

#### Background

1. Sir Muir Russell and David Eyton briefly summarized progress on the Review. The terms of reference required the Review to consider among other things management and governance structures. This sequence of interviews was aimed at exploring the framework for the management of research within the University: what staff take on; what the university expects them to deliver, subject to what requirements on quality, standards, processes and procedures; what are the associated financial disciplines; and how all this is communicated to staff.

#### Research priorities and Strategy

2. Professor Davies gave an overview on the Universities processes, set out on diagram Supporting Doc 2A, a development of that supplied earlier by Ian McCormick. This indicated where charring responsibilities lay, and the structure of a board and research manager supporting the Director of CRU.
3. He also provided a diagram [Supporting Doc 15] setting out the research structure of the School of Environmental Sciences. He explained that the School's size and significance for the University reflected a decision in recent years to invest strongly in environmental science, based on the Norwich Research Park. He commented that, whatever the future might hold for CRU, environment would remain an area in which the University intended to play a major role, it being the biggest environmental school in the UK.
4. Historically CRU had been an autonomous entity within the University, with separate reporting lines, distinct finances, and pursuing lines of research that were not determined within overall University policy. The links with the School were not as strong as they might have been; that changed when the Unit was incorporated more fully into the School. Links with the Hadley Centre have strengthened over time. We asked for details of the time lines of appointments held by significant people in the CRU, past and present [Supporting Doc 16].

#### Research priorities and Strategy

5. Prof Davies said that CRU was small – a total of 15 or 16 staff, with 3.5 established posts and the rest postgraduate students and post-docs. In the 1990s all but the Director would have been on “soft money”. The university's investment decisions had meant more established posts, up to 5 at peak, and had led to more joint research projects being developed with other parts of the School.
6. Activities in the CRU were largely controlled by its Director.

7. When the CRU was set up in 1972 it was the first climatic unit anywhere in the world. In effect a fringe activity which developed over time into a more mainstream and collegiate unit.
8. The CRU has major, collaborative links with the Tyndall Centre and Atmospheric Sciences.
9. The CRU had reacted against those who were critical of it or were perceived to be wasting its time, for example through unreasonable behaviour outside the normal peer review process.

#### University requirements

10. We asked Prof Davies about the quality control and monitoring procedures operated by the University, and he confirmed the picture we had been given by Ian McCormick. We noted that good practice in research and performance management would be discussed at a separate interview.
11. All PIs on awards are chased by the University for the timeliness and quality of their work.
12. There are regular meetings between PIs and their supervisors.

Muir Russell

27 April 2010